Will the Technical Pillar of the Fourth Railway Package cross the finish line?

After five years of debate, conditioned certification of rolling stock in Europe is gradually moving closer with the technical pillar of the Fourth Railway Package. However, Philippe Clinckx, director general of the European Railway Industry Association (UIC) worries that delays to the key legislation could hinder its fruition.

The current system of authorizations and safety certification is fragmented and not fit for the Single European Railway Area (SERA) envisaged by the EU. The technical pillar aims to harmonize the systems, improve efficiency and reduce administrative burdens.

The legislative process has been slow, and the Council has yet to adopt the final text of the technical pillar. The European Parliament has yet to give its opinion and the European Court of Justice has yet to issue a final ruling on the legal challenge.

The technical pillar includes a system that is in place in some countries, but not in others. The system is complex and requires extensive documentation and testing. The European Commission is working on proposals to simplify the system, but delays mean that the technical pillar will not be ready until the end of 2024.

The legislation will also address issues such as the interoperability of rolling stock and the harmonization of technical standards. The aim is to create a level playing field for all operators in the single market.

The process has been slow and requires further coordination between the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission. However, the European Railway Industry Association (UIC) is optimistic that the technical pillar will be adopted in the near future.

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